

**Helping Those Affected by Mount Soledad Landslide
Council President Scott Peters, First District
For the La Jolla Light, October 2007**

Given Mount Soledad's geological history and history of soil slippage, this month's massive landslide was not unexpected, but still came as a surprise to many. My concern is for the affected families as they find ways to repair and rebuild the homes in which they have invested so much time, effort and care. I know that neighbors, families and friends pitched in to minimize the inevitable disruption.

Thanks to the early action and quick work of city crews, no one was killed or injured, and residents were given advance notice and a few hours to gather their belongings. Rescue crews were on scene immediately to free trapped residents and secure the site. Utility and public works crews tended to water, wastewater, electric and gas lines. Engineers and geologists worked to secure the hillside and began the hard work of rebuilding public roads.

Some have been quick to assign blame, as is an unfortunate practice too common in modern public life. I have chosen to focus on helping the affected families recover, and I'll leave blame assigning to the lawyers.

Work is already underway to begin repairs to Soledad Mountain Road. I am as eager as anyone to see that road repaired quickly, as that is my preferred way to and from work. The emergency declaration approved unanimously by the City Council allows the City to expedite design and contracting work and access state and federal disaster funds to quickly re-build this busy road. While it will most likely be many more months before the repairs are complete and Soledad Mountain Road is re-opened, I applaud the Mayor and city staff for their round-the-clock efforts.

In the meantime, residents, me included, seem to be navigating the detour routes with few problems. I would ask that we all be mindful of the families living along the new alternate routes, and watch our speed, especially near local schools.

As an aside, the recent issues on Mount Soledad have once again pointed out the confusion created by re-drawn council district boundaries. When I was elected to the City Council in 2000, the entirety of La Jolla was included in the First Council District. I knocked on doors in the affected area of Mount Soledad and pledged to those residents to protect and enhance their community.

The decennial census and redistricting process two years later carved away this section of La Jolla, assigning it to the Second Council District, now represented by my colleague Kevin Faulconer. The boundary line is only a half-block from my house. I am proud to work alongside Mr. Faulconer, and applaud him and his staff for their caring and rapid response to this disaster. However, I feel that this splitting up of La Jolla is a disservice to our community. I look forward to the next round of redistricting following the 2010 census, when I hope La Jolla will be reunited.